

"Sinner Man"). And it's all soulful. A must have.

-Laura-

"Ripe"

-Skavoovie and the Epitones.

Moon Ska Records

Skavoovie! This is the cd you listen to when you want upbeat but not cheesy. You know--friendly...but not manic. Few new bands blend the jazzy and ska-y as well as Skavoovie does. Some highlights: a cover of Duke Ellington's "Bli-Blip" and another cover, "Drunk." I also liked "Frog Spirit" and "Blood Red Sky," sort of funny, sci-fi arrangements. All in all, the Epitones music has deviated a bit from the focused, straight-up ska jazzness of their debut, "Fat Footin", into a more, um, carefree type style. Still good, though. 'Nuff said. Moon Ska gave this to TMN free under their wonderful encourage-the-zines-policy. Thanks Moon!

Love n' Respect

As much as we'd like to think so, we couldn't have done it alone. So many people wrote for us, wrote to us, voiced their support, and read the bootleg first issue. We owe it to you. So, thanks to all of you, of which these are just a few...



Jumpstarts, SeeSpot (R.I.P! *sniffle*), the Articles, lotsa other yummy bands, Kim, Sara Evers, Anthony Torres, Noah Wildman, Niilo, Nate, Francisco, J.C., Lizzie, Lauren M., Stephanie, Survival (just cuz, baby!), Mark Coyle, Jeff Wondrely, Jeremy @ Everybody's, WILLIAM (can't wait for your interviews, baby!), Small Publishers Coop, Dana B, Jon Stothfang, Ioanna, and anyone else we forgot--Thanks.

THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE
FOR FINE SKA INFO
& CRITICISM!

THE PEOPLE'S SKA ANNUAL

Send a large SASE
w/ 2 first class stamps to
TPSA, c/o Noah Wildman
PO Box 1418, NYC, NY 10276

Advertise in TMN!*

full page....\$10

1/2 page....\$5

zines, people who send us stuff...Free!

(*You think making a zine is cheap? C'mon, it's TMN, not your mom!)

Thanks for the art, Jon!



Issue #11

\$1



That's

My

Spring '98

Number!

"Follow me,
I'm the Pied Piper,
I'll show you where
it's found..."

Really Now...

Ska-diddly boom! (where the hell did *that* come from?) Welcome to *That's My Number* issue numero 11 as in Ocean, babeel! Second go. It was pretty much finished in February, but with schoolwork and work-work and just plain busyness we didn't touch it for practically two months. It's finished now, though. Small Publisher's Co-op was great--the brand-spanking new "professionally" printed format is evidence of that, baby! No more bootleg cut, paste, xerox, repeat jobs for us anymore--and no more turnin' it sideways to try and read it for you neither. So..with all this new time on yer hands...(No, groveling fan mail is a poor expenditure of it)...how 'bout contributing? C'mon Mr. Talkative--get on it! Moving on....What's that you say? Back to the where? The roots of rocksteady, that lovable, oh-so-danceable granddaddy o'reggae? Did someone pay you to say that? Eeeeexcellent. What an astute reader we have today! Enjoy...

-->Anne<--

Random (but important) TMN info:
Our mailing address is:

That's My Number
P.O. Box 42103
Cincy, OH 45242

We don't care if you reprint anything, but please contact us first and cite the source. Also, as usual, contributions are welcome and invited! If you're in a band, by all means send us your demo. (Engine 54, we're still waiting...<grin>) Laura and I do reserve the right to edit as minimally or extensively as we choose. Heheh. Power.

Can't You See?

Last issue it was a quiz, but for TMN's spring issue: whoever sends a list of all of the references made to specific songs smattered in titles/articles throughout (this one's free: "Really Now" is a marvelous song by the Dreamletts) gets a free CD! Music reviews, of course, don't count and you have to name an artist. It doesn't have to be the original artist, but chances are it is. It's [all] you...

It's All for YOU, baby!

They say you can never go home again, but I beg to differ - here I am back on the big comfy armchair of TMN #11 (two, actually, but who's counting? Not I, as you can see - I (and Anne) have been so busy with this school garbage we barely have time to shower. Alright, no time.) So, as crusty as we are, we want to thank everyone who contributed to this lil' piece of work (and there are lots of ya!). You best enjoy #11 - but there are three things to keep in mind while reading it - don't feed it after midnight, don't put in water, and that watered down radio bubble gum AIN'T ska, pops! That bug-eyed, drooling expression on your face obviously means either STSC's getting *busy*, or you've noticed the new, snazzy format of TMN (baby's growin' up!). Like all good things, this wasn't free, so help us pay for it, 'cause no one's hiring us when we're this dirty! That's about it - keep yer ears happy with the sounds that make the plants grow - roots roots ROOTS! They love ya back, commitment-free! Adios, shalom, and au revoir -

-->Laura<--



review will suffice...

31

make it infectious and undeniably danceable. It's no "Pied Piper"--but hey, I'm a bit partial.

"I'm the King/The Heat" 7"

-The Insteps. Stubborn Records

Who can say anything bad about the much-missed Insteps? "The Heat" is a neo-trad, easy-listenin' instrumental. As for "I'm the King"....Think Derrick Morgan's "I am the Ruler" gone all third wave boppy. It's got a carnival sound stylee thing going on. Nice, tight horns though--but who's surprised?

"Reggae Got Soul (c/w Dog War)" 7"

-Toots and the Maytals. Island Records

Ah, the richness of vinyl. Crackle....crackle...*snapping back into sentence* This is beautiful! "Reggae Got Soul" is as wrenchingly soulful as ever, but the real surprise here is "Dog War." I've heard it as "Dog War," and I've heard it as "Broadway Jungle"--but I've never heard it like this. I'm still drooling. This is the best Maytals song I've heard, ever. This remix (alright, probably the original mix of it) has lots of soul, lots of drums, and a different chorus. "Ow! Lord have mercy!" You got that right.

-Anne-

***+

"Push Dis Ya Dance Hall (c/w Keep on Pushing)" 7"

-Rita Marley All Stars. Rita Marley Music

Hmmm. I love Rita a whole lot, but this 1992 release isn't one of her best. It's sounds all 80's keyboady-dancehall, if that's possible. Nonetheless, her sweet vocals

"Guns of Navarone." "Guns Fever."

"Phoenix City" 7"

-The Skatalites. Baba Brooks. and Roland Alphonso. Trojan Records

How many more good 7"'s are you gonna bring back from London, T.K.? No 'surprises here--straight-up trad and nothing else. Not even a remix of any of these. I've heard them all a thousand times and I'm sure you have too...

"The Toughest"

-Peter Tosh. Heartbeat Records

How much rock steady can one girl take? A lot, if it's Peter Tosh! A whole lot! All of it! Bring it on! It just doesn't quit. Unlike many of our Studio One friends who went reggae or electronic 80's dub when the 60's (sadly) ended, Peter Tosh kept the love, mon! (He also kept his picture--the cover is just him cut out of a picture of the original Wailers..<grin>) This album is a seriously wonderful showcase of all that is ska. It ranges from the upbeat ("When the Well Runs Dry") to the rocksteady/nascent stages o'dub ("Rasta Shook Them Up") to the rock-you-even-steadier ("Shame and Scandal,"

Reel", and Lord Tanamo's "Come Down". Even the Jimmy Cliff song, "King of Kings" is alright. As several of you already know, I usually can't stand that little punko. Speaking of little punkos, there's also an enjoyable song called "Judge Not", credited to a very young Robert Marley. And of course, don't think there's a person on earth who can deny loving "My Boy Lollipop" by Millie Small.

Island has done a wonderful job with this CD, and I think it's essential for almost any collection, if not for the classics, at least for the rarer tracks. It's hard to find a compilation of any genre, especially Jamaican ska, which usually has to have either Tommy McCook and some other fella doing "songs" that were really just excuses to solo for minutes upon minutes, or some unbearable Jimmy Cliff "Ska Around the World" type thing, that I can listen to all the way through and love every song. Except, of course, for that Jiving Juniors one.

-Niilo

(Ed. Note: I haven't listened to this release, so I can't rate it, but just remember for all of TMN's reviews: Everybody's gonna give you free advice...)

"Evening Time"

-Jackie Mittoo & the Soul

Vendors. Studio 1 Series Re-release on Heartbeat

Rock steady. Oh yeah, baby. Hello, 1968 Jamaica. Hello brilliance. Thank you to the kind Moon employee who suggested this when I came in, in a hurry to buy Ernest Ranglin! *smooch* The title song, "Evening Time," reminds me very much of the Pioneers for whatever reason--have a listen and get back to me. A bit uncanny. "Hot Shot" is definitely a highlight. Heck, the whole album is smooth and irresistibly danceable. Ironically, the only song I don't

care for too much is "Dancing Groove," which sounds very much like Delroy Wilson's "Dancing Mood," just plus an annoying church organ-like sound in the background and minus Delroy's crooning lyrics. Nonetheless...Instrumental good. Soul beat good. Rock steady very good. Album beautiful.

-Anne-

"Chicken Scratch"

-Lee Perry. Studio 1 Series

Re-release on Heartbeat

I've had this album for about a year and a half on tape...but this is the type of album that you just gotta buy on CD or vinyl--or the tape will wear out. I did; it's that good. Backed by the Skatalites, and showcasing the vocal talents of none other than the queen o'reggae and soul, Rita Marley (with her soul band, the Soulettes) and the Dynamites, this early Lee "Scratch" Perry re-release (it spans only 1964-1966) sounds dramatically different than Perry's later work, which progressed into classic dub. I guess I'd have to call "Chicken Scratch" and "Solid as a Rock" the highlights of this album, but it's difficult to choose. As a result of the original recording equipment, however, the sound quality is a bit poor at times, and the songs tend to blend together a bit in style and tune. As far as Perry's voice--you either love it or hate it. I love it, but give it a listen first.

-Anne-

*****/2

"Girls Go Skat!"--Hey, I haven't been able to get my mitts on this yet, but I heard that it was wicked good. Someone want to send me money for it? Alright, a tape of it? Just a

30

Spendin' the Weekend...

-TMN Show Reviews-

There were lots of shows this spring in Cincinnati-- but, unfortunately, by that time we were way too busy to sit down and write reviews for all of them. The Business/Dropkick Murphys, Temptations/4-Tops, Skatalites/LGB, Skinnerbox, etc shows were all quite good. But hey, you'd rather go to them than spend all day reading about them, right?

-Nice Guy Eddie-

Fudgie and Fufu-the Coin Collectors
-Oct. 25, 1997 @ Buzz Coffeeshop

Sara and I got to the show really late (we set off someone's burglar alarm, but that's another story...), so we missed most of the Coin Collectors, who I'd never heard of. When we walked in, I thought they were some kind of awful thrash band, but they turned out to be really funny. So then Fudgie and Fufu, the band I came to see, started their set. Two skinny guys, a tape, and lots of props (Most were edible, but there was also a blow-up dalmation and a Twister board). It was then that I started to notice the incredibly diverse crowd. From goths to greasers, the eclectic mix of people assembled at Buzz were far from the homogenous norm. Everyone was really nice, and even the goths gave black smiles when F&F played. And oh, play they did. These boys were jumping around, greasing themselves with cupcakes, biting each other, throwing donuts at the crowd (the refrain of "D not D" - "Deez nuts (point point), not donuts" (throw throw)) Crazy. When else has half the crowd gone up on stage and literally bowed down to the band? ("Thou shalt honor thy Fudgie and Fufu...") A classic. I even bought their CD (with pretty art by the illustrious Jon Stothfang!) I'm kinda pissed, though, cause it doesn't have the severed head song on it. But it was well worth it. The last band, Nice Guy Eddie, I'd seen before. They played really well, a nice trad/modern ska combo. I left early, so I didn't see the whole set. But

what I saw was really solid. They seem to have improved since I last saw them. And I give them props, since F&F is a hard act to follow. Anyone want a Twinkie?

Nice Guy Eddie & Trigga Happy

November 7, Caddy's Upstairs

Okay, first of all--Spectre, where the heck were you?! The band I went out to see was a no-show. What a lose. Anyway, when my friends and I showed up there were about, oh, ten people there. (This unexplainable paucity of fans still eludes me...did the Spectre kidnap all of our little ska kids? I miss the little boogers!) Poor Nice Guy Eddie was on first, and they played about a half-hour late--one would assume in the vain hope that anyone else (*ahem*) would show up to support the scene. Seeming to follow nicely with the course of the night, however, few did. Nonetheless, NGE's energy was incredibly high throughout their set, even performing musical genres as called out by the audience at one point (n.b.--I was most impressed by their house techno rendition :P). Furthermore, their horn section is phenomenally tight. What a great trombonist! I was only just forgetting about Spectre when....Trigga Happy. I saw them at the ARA conference in Columbus this October and was not overly impressed, though I had heard that their performance there had even been an improvement on the past. Their set list was nigh-on identical to the one they played in Columbus...somewhat disappointing Laurel Aitken cover and all. Not too poor, but as the drunk thirty-

something rufie candidates-of-the-year began filtering upstairs, they seemed to become more and more inconsistent, to an extent that it wasn't even danceable anymore. Not as ska anyway. That drunk woman's version of ballet seemed about fitting...

-->anne<--

LHS--Scofflaws--Pro Midget

Mafia

Nov. 14, 1997--Caddy's Upstairs

On November fourteenth I graced Pro Midget Mafia, Lee Harvey Skaswald and, of course, the ever-impressive Scofflaws with my presence. It was a good show. Is that enough said? Probably not. The Scofflaws played a pleasing rendition of "Pee Wee's Big Adventure" and my personal favorite "'Til the End of Time." What show would be complete without a quick jaunt through "Boots" and "William Shatner?" Apparently not this one. The alto-saxophonist (who sadly did not sing too) was my hero. I would like to take the time to applaud his efforts (the keyboardist received second best because she was wearing the same shoes as I was). Even though the crowd was a bit sketch (the UC boy with a Hawaiian shirt and no rhythm), everyone was having a good time (including the drunk girl on top of her boyfriend behind me). If you didn't go, that must suck. You missed out on a quality show.

-->allison<--

-Pietasters-

Pilfers-H2O-Amazing Royal Crowns

December 19, 1997-Bogart's

Wow! A super-amazing show! (exhale). The Pilfers, Amazing Royal Crowns, H2O, and the Pietasters all played great sets to a jam-packed, happy, sweaty crowd of kids. I got to see most of the show from backstage, cause Todd from the Pietasters and Rusty

from H2O are two of the nicest guys EVER! The greatest thing about this show was the heterogeneous mix of bands. Sumpin' for everyone, yo! The Pilfers (dub/rap hyper skacore kinda band) were first. The kids loved 'em - Coolie Ranx (lead vocalist and extremely cool guy) really worked the crowd. These guys have been touring like crazy, and I'd like to see some new material when I see them for the *fourth* time! Next up were The Amazing Royal Crowns (kind of psychobilly/swing with more -billy and swing than psycho music). They took a little bit of getting used to, but after about one song I was shakin it like crazy. Some people apparently weren't as enthusiastic as I, and threw stuff at the band. (Maybe hormone-heavy Pietasters groupies?) But they were great. H2O (Punkish/HC whatever sumpin or other) were also pretty smooth. I think the crowd were really into them. H2O aren't usually my cuppa tea, but they had super energy. Finally, the Pieboys took charge. They played lotsa the good old stuff and new stuff as well (I hadn't heard the new stuff before...it's different and will take some getting used to, but really tight.) I also can't resist mentioning that I got to join in (along with a Pilfer and an H2Oer) on the last song (the infamous Business cover "Drinkin' and Driving). Very nice. So, I guess you can tell that I had a good time. If you weren't there, I wanna know what you were doing, cause you should have been at the show.

-->Laura<--

Mod!

From '60's Mod to Oi!
Ferrum Records
P.O. Box 3181
Iowa City, IA 52244-3181

however, they are no less amazing. Although mostly instrumental, the songs that stand out contain the incredible vocals of Jackie Opel ("Old Rocking Chair") or the combined efforts of Stranger Cole and Ken Boothe ("World's Fair"). There is only one song featuring the sweet sound of Doreen Shaffer, but it is one of her best. By and large, this is definitely worth seeking out and making part of your collection.

"African Roots"

-Llyod Brevett and the

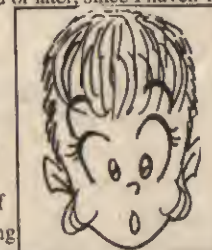
Skatalites. Moon Ska Records

smack I love you, Noah! This CD was complimentary from Moon...just for having written a 'zine. Props for that policy (!)....The Skatalites had three reunions between 1965 and their reformation in 1992--and this album is a product of their first in 1975, with several bonus (read: I'm still drooling) tracks from their years as Studio One's house band, including the trombone talent of the late Don Drummond. After their initial breakup, McCook had gone on to work with the Supersonics, and Roland Alphonso, Jackie Mittoo, and Brevett had formed the Soul Brothers (later the Soul Vendors). In 1975, however, at Brevett's request they showcased their talents together once more on this album...and....wow. The infectious Rasta drum beat mixed with the Skatalites.....Anne--speechless? Heheh. You better believe it. Enjoy it while you can.

"Volume 1: 1959-1964: Ska's The Limit"

Various Artists. Island Records

29 Island Records, the big major recording company that started out as a small Jamaican record label, is apparently commemorating its 40th anniversary by releasing a CD for every five years it's existed. The first one out is "Volume 1: 1959 - 1964: Ska's the Limit." I have to say they've done a great job. The disc starts out with some strong rhythm and blues and calypso-style songs, including Laurel Aitken's "Boogie in My Bones", "Lord Kitchener's "The Road", and Lord Creator's "Independant Jamaica." The Jiving Juniors' "Sugar Dandy" interrupts the smooth flow of these songs with what has, for me at least, come to be an unbearably annoying two minutes of high-pitched wailing. However, that song is the only low point of the whole CD and if you can somehow stomach the singing of one of the Juniors (who I believe they got rid of later, since I haven't heard him on the Jiving songs familiar even that an job of songwriting singer, though...



other Juniors I'm with), one's alright

That one

The CD then moves into the defined ska singer, and gives you classic after classic. I think it's worth buying just for "Carry Go Bring Come" by Justin Hinds and the Dominoes (Ed. note: why is this the only J.H. song ever on comps? Frickin' annoying! Especially since they have so much other great stuff. "Save a Bread", anyone?) and "Housewives' Coice" by Derrick & Patsy, which I think are, if not the best, definately two of the best ska songs ever written. Other highlights include Don Drummond doing "Eastern Standard Time", Eric Morris' often-covered "Solomon Grundie" and "Penny

--->Ratings System;<---

- **** Maytal's "Pressure Drop"
 *** Specials' "Pressure Drop"
 ** The Clash's "Pressure Drop"
 * Big 5's "Pressure Drop"
 O- No Doubt's...ah geez.

Alright--the next three reviews are from the commendable Jeff Wondrely, who has my eternal love n' respect for bailing me out when my car got towed (even if he does like Prince Buster better than Derrick). Here goes:

"Flip F' Real"

The Articles--Moon Ska

Records

The Articles are truly one of my all-time favorite bands. Their sound is along the lines of NYSJE's--but better, in my opinion. With covers of such greats as Theloniou Monk and Charlie Parker along with great original tunes, these guys cover all of the bases. The songs play with your emotions like few bands I've heard. The opening track, "Dragon Fly," gets you up and shouting; "You're Bread and Butter Pickles, Baby" from the middle of the CD gets you all misty-eyed. This is one of the best groups of musicians this side of the Skatalites, and anyone who appreciates instrumental ska-jazz should make this a part of their collection. Editor's Note: Jeff didn't leave an objective rating, but I would assume it would be four stars. As the powers that be, however, TMN gives it:

****/2

"The Politics of Style"

The Adjusters--Jump Up!
Records

Think soul-ska. Is the first thing that comes to mind the Pietasters? That's about to change. Ever since I got this disc, it has been on permanent rotation on my CD player. The Adjusters mix heavy soul with tuneful ska in a framework of decidedly leftist politics. This makes the sound not unlike the Pietasters, but a little more soulful, a lot more political. Paul Phelps of the Articles told me that when singer Daraka Kenric goes onstage at the start of a show he says "it's time to teach some kids"--and this attitude is evident in all of their songs. You can tell that these talented musicians truly believe what they sing about, which tends to be rare in this day and age of "radio-ready" ska music. Editor's Note: I...love...this... Must...meet...band...No, really--the vocals of Jessica Basta and Joan K. Axthelm just add one more irresistible element to this deadly sincere album. Durch kampf zum sieg, if you will. Rosa would be proud.

Some addresses reprinted in their liner notes:

Democratic Socialists of America

708 Varick Street

NYC, NY 10018

Modern Action Club & the Adjusters

1511 East 57th #2E

Chicago, IL 60637

"Studio One Presents: The Skatalites--Ska Foundation"

The Skatalites--Heart Beat
Records

This is the Skatalites. These are the undeniable kings of ska music. This double-disc release is full of some of the greatest music ever recorded. Suprisingly though, hits such as "Phoenix City" and "Guns of Navarone" (you mean this isn't a Specials song? :P) are missing from the set. While some of these songs are lesser known,

Stumbling Through '97 to '98...

-Anthony Torres

I recently met up with a girl who had friends of my friends dating back to 1994 and the first ska fests in Orlando. It was strange to realize that three years had passed and how things had expanded exponentially for quite a number of folks. Certain things I had felt would be inevitable had come to pass--a big selling ska band, folks crying sell out and arguing about misdefinitions, more 'zines coming up, and inevitably the good becoming great and the bad becoming worse.

Things weren't better three years ago and they aren't worse now. But, something's gotta give in 1998. I couldn't care about ska becoming popular or fading from public view. I'm interested in seeing what comes forth from the folks to whom the music is a huge inspiration in their lives. Hopefully something creative will come forth. Even if it sucks it'd be nice to see some half-hearted attempts at something more...Books. Photos. Videos. Origami.

It's just as important to give back now than to take everything in from the '60's and '70's. Perhaps the most progressive and influential publishing company has been ST. But c'mon kids. History starts now! Stop regurgitating George Marshall's words and thoughts and come up with your own. The world doesn't need another website or 'zine oversimplifying a complex history that spans two books. However, the world does need more folks taking stabs at defining the indefinable feelings that come from being associated within the cultures. It's rather dismal to see so little devoted to the so right feeling of being in your element. I fear the weak are weeding out the strong because they're reading the wrong watered down information, hearing the wrong words from the wrong mouths; yet setting the tone because they buy all the right consumables.

The biggest agent of change isn't a scream but a whisper. A suggestion. You don't have to publish a 4,000 page book. The first 80 page paperback may suck, but that may inspire someone to write the second and the third until we stop counting firsts and judge the books on their own true value--do they communicate?

I think it's too soon to release a contemporary photo book, but maybe someone will prove me wrong. But if the kids with cameras would apply themselves and shoot photos for their friend's 'zines,

we'd have more contemporary faces to look at than cut outs from the '60's. And anyways, if you have secret aspirations of minor celebrity, don't be shy. Have fun with it. Put out a photo 'zine of you and your friends ruling the scene (but please--spare us that "s" word...)

Likewise, I had seriously hoped music videos would communicate the feeling the music elicits in a visceral manner. No such luck yet. Fishbone had lots more heart in what they shot and put forth to sell a record. Granted, put someone in front of a camera and they want to ham it up, go for a cheap laugh. It's a universal thing with musicians. They may take their music pretty seriously, but they go for the cute thing on video, and it's pretty agonizing to have to sit through.

Blame the bands? Blame the label? Yeah, blame them all. What's the point of a status symbol like a music video if it's made by an unfunny hack?

Granted, the fear of capturing the essence of any emotion in a medium is that the situations represented may be lifted from the context of the emotion and taken at face value. Figurative speech is misinterpreted as literal commands, et cetera. Passion watered down to a pose; convictions safely assimilated to attitudes. Identities marketed as commodities.

In the underground film scene in the late '60's, folks wouldn't talk to one another about what they were gonna do. They'd make movies and talk to one another in that way. "This is how I'm feeling. This makes me feel this way." Rap artists would battle on wax in the old-school hip-hop days. I have a feeling this will resurface this year--answering our enemies and announcing our loyalties in a creative arena. The gimmicks are pretty much worn out so now it's gonna raise things to another level. Everyone's bored. We'll have to make our own entertainment.

Well kids, this is the year, so make something up and have it mean something to you. No one may appreciate it now, but ten years down the road its influence may be felt in the realm of substance-starved upstarts. You owe it to you.

L&K&OIS--Anthony

Ska Love and Special Sauce

"It don' mean a thing, if it don' got that scorchin' sting!" -King Stitt

It's been said that money breeds elitism, conformism, and numerous other -isms with negative connotations...it's my theory, however, that using my simple 1-step plan, the root of all evil can be used to make love connections in the ska scenes across the country. It's a well-known fact that pathetic scenesters all over the world wear cheap, ugly suits and short skirts (that might have fit before they gained all that beer-related weight) in hopes of meeting the gorgeous, perfect rudie or skin of their dreams...am I the only one who sees the madness?? I remember taking a trip to the Washington DC Federal Reserve Money Mint...besides spending five bucks for an "antique" two dollar bill, and wondering why the government can't just print out money to pay off the national debt, I learned that an average dollar bill travels around the country two times and lasts three years before finally being sent to Two-Tone or Moon Ska and being lost forever in the mail. This brings me to my main point...what if these overweight skinbirds and scrawny emo kids, instead of wasting hundreds of dollars in paying for those ugly clothes and expensive shoes, wrote their names and numbers on these dollar bills and distributed them in quality locations like coffee shops and clubs? Just think about it...

"Big-boned 200 lb. skinbird, likes Milwaukee's Best and guns, looking for 17 year old virile Mickey Fitz look-alike (intelligence unimportant, all inquiries accepted)"

"15 -year old 'rude girl' looking for any and all 'band members. Turn ons: Y-chromosomes, free tickets into shows..."

"Straight edge, 14 yrs. Likes video games, Ian shrines, anything with the letter 'x.' Absolutely nailed to the four corners until someone likes me."

These bills would not only last longer than the average "new" Doc Martens, but they would also travel a hell of a lot farther than I would to see any band billing itself as "skankademic." Sure, a few weirdos may get

hold of the dollar, harass you, and maybe even show up at your house, but where would love be without a little risk? Pretty soon, you'll be cuter than Sid and Nancy. Putting your name and number on a five dollar bill could also show the scenesters that



you're a rudie with high prestige and ska status...you could also show a little creativity (and your true colors) by checkering the bill. Or how about a big fat "Oi!" here and there? Or show your sensitive side by writing "R.I.P." next to Abraham's head...THE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS!!! Is your girlfriend pestering you to buy her an expensive hundred dollar plaid skirt or teddy bear backpack? She won't bother you anymore when she realizes you have your name and phone number on each one of those suckers. See that cute homeless chick over there? I'm sure she's appreciate some change. You see, with my plan, everybody wins!!!

INCLUDING ME:
Please send an unmarked five dollar donation to:
That's My Number
P.O. Box 42103
Cincinnati, OH 45242
for devising this plan.

6

Noah, continued

expression for all hardcore ska fans. To then. I say: I am a ska geek, I have been a ska geek for fourteen years, and I will continue to be a ska geek until the thread that holds the patches to my flight jacket rots and falls away.

Zine Reviews, continued

checkers) and an excerpt of "The Evils of Wal-Mart" finish up this troubling 'zine. Alright, not quite: in case some group feels unrepresented by God's kingdom--a bunch of hippie/"I'm pathetic" quotes and a picture of some hippie/mermaid/wiccan girl on the back. Hmmm....

Send one dollar to:

God's Kingdom
Attn: Megan Arenaz
4909 Forest Oaks Dr.
Las Vegas, NV 89129-5732

-Laura-

Cosmic Haystack #4- There is absolutely nothing offensive about Cosmic "Ride All Three Waves at Once" Haystack. It has the compulsory Noah Wildman article, a great article by (yes, BY!) the Skatalites, an interview with Sto Svirat (Bohemian ska), neat photos, a "Skankin' on the Net!" guide to the web, music reviews of mostly Moon stuff, etc., etc., et cetera. Definitely worth checking out. If you're the window-shoppin' type, check out their regularly updated website at <http://www.rudenet.com/cosmic>.

Or send a dollar to:

Cosmic Productions
P.O. Box 15945-149
Lenexa, KS 66285-5945

-Laura



Not Just a Brand New Secondhand
-Jeff Wondrelly

Everyone rips on the third wave of ska. With bands like Reel Big Fish and Save Ferris getting all of the spotlight while Isaac Green and the Skalars (now simply the Skalars) don't even make it on MTV because Goldfinger beat them out on "12 Angry Viewers," I can understand why. People are getting irritated with the "mainstreaming" of ska. What they fail to recognize, however, is that the third wave of ska has given us some of the best music in a long, long time. Take, for example, the Insteps--an absolutely phenomenal and irrefutably talented band whose breakup was perhaps the worst news of last year on the ska scene. The Toasters, sometimes considered both the tail-end of 2-tone and the innovators of third wave, is one of the best live bands I have seen, even though their music stopped being fresh in my opinion after "Dub 56." The west coast neotrad scene, from Ocean 11 to Jump With Joey, is huge. After all, who's going to begrudge a band like Hepcat the success they deserve?

In light of the success of third wave, it is important to know the good, bad, and totally wretched. The roots of today's music are just that--solid foundations from which to grow, change, and perpetuate that danceable beat. It is up to you--the fan, the reader, the collector--to keep an open mind and an ear for talent. Good music, after all, is universal and certainly transcends "waves." The third wave isn't the death of ska as some critics believe. It is a growth upon the form.



FRED PERRY



26



Things a Get From Bad to Worse Everyday...

But hey, even the Ethiopians need a little bad humor in their lives...

Top 10 Reasons to be a "Rude Girl"

10. There's always something to do on weekends. In the event there is no show, you can simply adopt the original rude mentality and FSU all over town, baby!
9. You can get away with whatever you want to. There are no "4-Corners" to this!!
8. Cute haircuts!! (see disclaimer on #4)
7. You can write 'zines and spread the word. (Boys can do this too, but it's just not the same.)
6. Ever notice the girl: boy ratio at a show? Like a snowflake in the Sahara!
5. Glaring at wannabe girls who come to shows because their boyfriends like RBF or something. Using their checkered shirts to direct traffic.
4. You can wear whatever you want to (see #1)--as long as it has style! That means you, Ms. Baby Tee...

3. If you know what you're talking about (and you better!) people *will* be intimidated. Heh heh.

2. Ska and reggae. 'nuf said.

1. there's really no such thing as a "rude girl," so everyone sets the standard!

What's the difference between a sXe and a drunk?5 years.

Top Ten Reasons to be a "Rude Boy"

10. Guaranteed success as a janitor--pick it up pick it up...
9. To protect and serve the offbeat.
8. Hey, if MTV likes SKA, it's gotta be the best thing since sliced bread!
7. Those rude girls with the plaid skirt and argyle socks are so darn cute. Your mom will like that you're being thrifty by wearing your father's old clothes.
6. By coating oneself with checkers, one becomes the perfect zebra hunter.
5. Dickie Barret told me to.
4. Save the Earth; ride a Vespa.
3. It's better than hardcore (haha Matt!)
2. Cool new initiation into the drunkest frat on campus.
1. Rudeboy invasion!

-Nate-

How many skins does it take to change a lightbulb?

Just one, but he'll only do it if he has a crew to back him up and someone to break the old lightbulb over when he's done. Brad?

How many punks does it take to change a lightbulb?

None, punks don't change anything. Hehe..ouch! Kidding, Joe, geez!...<grin>

Spirit of '64--It's All About Soul

-(or, take off yer parka already! It's June!)

The following is a series of excerpts of letters written to me from Mark Coyle, an ex-Mod from the U.K. with a wonderful flair for writing and genuine interest in helping out with the magazine. TMN is looking to expand its base a little to Mods and Northern Soul--and who better to ask than an expert--from Nottingham, no less (he assured me that Robin Hood was indeed on their patches). Unfortunately, this issue had to be sent to the printers before Mark had a chance to complete his article...yet all the better for the next issue. And, in the meantime, if any of you soulies have anything to add out there, please do.

Anne,

I'm quite prepared to spill the beans on my past. You'll love it. It really is the story of a working class lad, struggling to get on while around him a whirlstorm of fights, crime, loves, drinking, dancing and hanging around goes on. I hope your friends aren't too easily shocked. They'll be a fair amount of violence and crime especially during the early years when I was a kid (not ever by me but I can't deny it went on around me; in fact I was a "runner" for th ultimate leader, Joe Tucker, mod, monster, and criminal. Made Samuel L. Jackson look like Oscar Wilde).

Honestly this is Mod in the UK, stylish, upfront, elitist, and fun. Should I start the article?.....

I have stories of Camaby Street having my suits made up, reuniting a Mod club called The Dancing Slipper, all nighters, riots, a HUGE skinhead vs. Mod battle, being hidden in a shop while being chased, a Mod wedding with 500 (count 'em) scooter and local casuals trying to set light to the hall, our tents in the river and fights in the hospital. This is perhaps 2% of overall.

Regards

Mark

....Anne,

Ah, 17, eh? No lies I promise but at 15 I was running the Dancing Slipper and organizing whiskey drinking competitions. The things we had to do to get in there...

Then there was Diane's engagement party where about a hundred scooters were parked outside and these vicious NF skins came and pushed the lot over like dominoes. There were parkas chasing them all over this very well to do area.

The time I got threatened by nutters in Derbyshire.

Walking home twenty-five miles with no lights on the road when a girl's parents came home and the party was in full swing.

Falling asleep at soul all-nighters (many times).

Running the T-Birds Mod Scooter Club with everyone. The names everyone got, Cockney Mark (not me), Geordie, Joe 90, Crewsey, Simmo, Spit, Pyschedelic John, Lanky Phil, etc. I still see many of them and don't even know their real names after fifteen years.

Being bullied at school and getting my much older Mod friends to turn up at school and give the bullies something to really worry about.

Being attacked by scooter boys (who hated Mods back then). They jumped out of a van looking for me (what I'd done I still don't know). Legging it and my mates taking a battering with baseball bats.

Dancing to "Time for Action" and being launched into the air, then everyone starting to dance again and me falling fifteen feet.

The infamous "backdrop" incident to "Love on a Mountain Top." Way cool.

The Psychadots scooter club, the Athenians.

Asking for buttons to be sewn on the bottom of my suit trousers in Carnaby Street and them thinking I was nuts only to find we had started a trend in Nottingham.

Pop Art t-shirts, the embracement of Andy Warhol prints on clothes.

I could go on and will later. As for music, well that was my big thing (still is). I can really help there. The debates over '60's punk and garage, Stax and southern soul vs. Detroit and Northern, the explosion of R&B etc. Five copies of "He's Coming Home" by Beverly Ann turning up and a race by all of us to get one.

Do you get The Untouchables magazine sent to you by the London "Mouse Trap" Mod nighters crew. They are friends of mine and quite legendary. It's still a happening!

Cycle shirts, Ben Sherman shoes, paisley cravats, brogues for dancing in, spats, bowling shoes we really did steal from the bowling alley.

Spending all my Saturday job money on Kent compilation albums.

Being escorted out of Skegness with police.

I have often thought of writing a book: I do write anyway, short stories. I thought I'd put it all down and you can use it here.

Black leather gloves, Crombie coats, woven ties (single colour only), white socks (oh gawd!).

Smashing up the school disco to "My Generation," subsequently it was banned.

The Small Faces, the early Kinks, "Have I the Right," "Friday On My Mind," "Jump and Dance" by Carnaby, "Out On the Floor," "Like Adam and Eve."

Georgie Fame "Yeh Yeh" and "Get Away,"

"Stepping Stone" by the Monkeys,

NO Rolling Stones, ever!

The Riot Squad, "Leaving Here" by the Birds,

Julien Covey "A Little Bit Hurt," the ultimate scorched.

Quadruple spins and stopping dead. Being scared because your mates had shoplifted.

Secondhand clothing shops with suits for £14 (about \$20)

Keep the Faith, Keep On Burning, Right On Soul Brother,

Patches on your jacket, Air Force bomber jackets,

Shades, rectangle shades, monocles. Calling yourself a stylist. Walking sticks (for a while). Boating shoes, fur-lined hoods.

Ticket pockets, sometimes up to three per jacket.

It's all coming back in my mind. Write back and I'll start work and send over some thoughts.

'Zine Reviews

25

Love them or hate 'em, ya gotta give them props for actually putting in the effort and trying.

Shakeface #2 - If you live in Cincinnati, you've probably already seen this zine, since most people here know Jon Stodhang in one way or another. For those of you who haven't found a way to get your grubby little mitts on it - you should. His zine covers many scenes without attaching itself to one (except maybe SXXE?), which is a nice change. Interviews with Koan and the Articles. Many reviews, great artwork (Jon is the best comic artist since...CJ), a militant feminist comic strip, and other funny, random stuff. (The 'milk and cheese across the world' card is a little too random.) Overall, I was incredibly impressed - people answer his readers survey - and have already read it twice.

Pick up a minny scoop o' Shakeface #2:
SHAKEFACE MEDIA EMPIRE
15 W. McMillan Ave. Apt. #2
Cincy, OH 45219

-Laura

Eugene #8 - Sorry to have to be the one to say it, but...Eugene #8 is kinda, um, pointless. I envision bored Kentucky kids who kinda like skacore writing about what makes them mad at three a.m. while eating bubble gum-flavored mini-muffins. This issue of Eugene, which I got from three *really* nice kids at the Pleiades show (hi Melissa, if you're reading!), is "the Andrea issue." Apparently this means everybody who writes for the 'zine (and there are plenty) has to mention Andrea. Whoever Andrea is, they apparently forgot to mention. I did like a few things, though--the interview with the Aquabats was funny, and the layout and design was really nice--lots of pictures and art. This issue also features interviews with Mockinwocky and Save Ferris, a stupid story, lots of pop-punk reviews ('member eighth grade?...*sniffle*), '80's quotes, and a suspiciously Shakeface-like readers' poll. Oh and the guy in back needs to put a shirt on.

This *KY* production can be reached at:
Eugene Fanzine
c/o Mark Borders
229 Apache Drive
Paint Lick, KY 40461-9750

-Laura

Mind Toilet issue #7 (the one with the Mephiskapheles interview): "Could this be the very last issue of NYC's biggest bimonthly

skate zine?" is the question posed on the cover. Well, I sure hope so, for what it's worth. Sorry guys, but the toilet, well...stank. No pictures for the first 12 pages or so, and nothing related to music, just rants about atheism. Hmm...That's great. I really care about your views on religion. Thank you for putting them in the 'zine. Ska, shma. I know how hard it is to put out an interesting 'zine, but you could at least try. The only thing even remotely worth looking at is the interview with Meph, and only because they talk about genitalia. Oh, and the picture of Noah Wildman's ass.

If you want to get rid of a few of those excess brain cells, send \$8 for 6 issues (1 year) to:

Mind Toilet Magazine
P.O. Box 6132
L.I.C., NY

or email MindToilet@AOL.com
-Anne and Laura

All That's Good #2 - Only two issues of this 'zine ever came out, but with the ska and rocksteady music reviews, an essay on style in the 60's, a "Fabulous 45's" 7 inch review section, ska and skazine reviews and more, this 'zine is worth the effort of chasin' down, baby. We gave it an A+. TMN aspires to be this stylin'! The snazzy b&w photos make me happy. I'm not if there are any back issues left-but if you *can* get your greasy little paws on #1 or 2 you'll be as inspired as we were.

Send \$1 and your undying praise to:

All That's Good! c/o Juliana Robins
5233 Lynnwood Dr.
Camarillo CA 93012

God's Kingdom #2 - Hmm...Picture this: the cover's on backwards and upside down and has a drawing of a girl with a skateboard. JNCO's (this is labelled twice in case you missed it), a checkered belly shirt that says "rude girl," a baby-backpack, and X on her hand. I hate to be so critical, because this 'zine makes a sincere effort--and even succeeds at some brief moments--but come on! How many trends can one 'zine cash in on? There's a photo of what looks like Hitler youth (?), a "letter" to Santa from Barbie (slightly funny), an interview with Kemuri (a Japanese punk-ska band), random drawings of "cute boys" with completely illegible captions. It's music reviews are decent--but the zine reviews? No room to criticize here, guys. A generic history of ska ripped directly from a website (again accompanied by a nauseating plethora of

Continued on page

27

“Bible Meetings” 24

"If you have a racist friend, now is the time--now is the time--for your friendship to end. Tell them to change their views...or change their friends. So if you know a racist who thinks he is your friend, now is the time--now is the time--for your friendship to end...Call yourself my friend? Now is the time to make up your mind; don't try to pretend. If you are racist, our friendship has got to end. And if your friends are racist, don't pretend to be my friend. So if you have a racist friend now is the time--now is the time--for our friendship to end..."

--The Specials

I just wanted to take a second to write to skins who hang out nazis under the guise of "politics don't matter." Sure, skinheads were just another youth movement when it started and politics were irrelevant, but over time this undeniably changed. NF and nazi skins, who are by definition strongly political, are an undeniable element today. You'll hang out with a nazi because he has "no politics"—when indeed he irrefutably does—and fail to see the fallacy? All of you clinging to George Marshall's words are doing it for the wrong reasons to justify something which I am sure he never intended. Or say you claim, however mistakenly, that this nazi somehow "keeps his politics out of being a skinhead" (and for some horrible reason the very fact that he is a nazi isn't enough to keep you away)—how many of you would hang out with a communist skin under the same circumstances then? ... Yeah, I thought so.... This is not to say everyone has to have politics to be a skin at all. Trad skins are great. Trad skins represent the roots of the subculture. Skins who hang out with nazis do not. Don't abuse the term "political" to give you an excuse to hang out with someone who ultimately purports genocide—ignorant, scared, and looking for a scapegoat. You are, in fact, simply using your vague stance as a weak excuse to ignore something so abhorrible. Screw fascism *and* your de facto sympathy.

-anne-

PHOTO GALLERY!

If you see me comin' at cha with a camera... (complicated mostly taken by ^{Levin} Levin)

Circus Rex! ↓ Joanne took this one!

Xerox of a xerox of a picture of TK's bend...

West Side Picture I met in London

Adam of LGB & Skelets show

Xerox of a xerox of a picture of TK's bend...

Xerox of a xerox of a picture

met Sax Pkwy I met in London

Regards
Mark

Amazing, eh? And I thought Night Shift was entertaining (read it, btw!). Neat, neat, neat.

Banana Banana

A bimonthly mod music zine. Issue number 1 out now featuring Groove Tunnel, The Chosen, SKOOPY, The Cybermen, reviews and more.
\$1.00 for USA, 2 IRCs Canada, Mexico & Europe,
3 IRCs everywhere else.

\$1.00 for USA, 2 IRCs Canada, Mexico & Europe,
3 IRCs everywhere else.

BangBang Buzz c/o David Richardson

PO Box 3181 Iowa City, IA 52244-3181 USA



Answers to "Know Yer Roots!" Quiz in Issue #007

1. What was Clement "Coxsone" Dodd's real middle name?
Seymore.
2. Who's nickname was "the Trojan"?
Duke Reid
3. Who was Cecil Bustamante Campbell?
Prince Buster.
4. Who was Walt Jabsco named after?
Walt Disney.
5. What was The Specials's original name?
The Coventry Automatics.
6. With whom did Derrick Morgan have a "blazing" rivalry?
Prince Buster.
7. Who comes fifth in the Toots & the Maytals song "Desmond Dekker (Dactres) Came First"?
Derrick Herriott.
8. Where was Laurel Aitken born?
Cuba.
9. By what song was the Maytals's "spiritual healing" inspired?
Marvin Gaye's "Sexual Healing."
10. What band is the quote on the cover adapted from?
Symarip. It was, for those of you who did not get to see it, "Look at my fools, feet whatever. I got the biggest monkey boots!"
11. What was the Maytals's disc "Dog War" also known as?
Broadway Jungle
12. From where did the 3rd wave band Magadog get their name?
Surprisingly, not from the Bob Marley and the Wailers' song of the same name: "Maga Dog"...they got it from the back of an old Trojan record, which read "Dance the Magadog..."
13. From whom did the Wailers cover "The 10 Commandments of Love"?
The Moonflows
14. What song can the Maytals be seen performing in Lance's favorite movie, *The Harder They Come*?
Sweet and Dandy
15. What name did the Wailers first go by?
The Teenagers
16. What is Studio One short for?
Jamaica Recording and Publishing Studio, Ltd.

And as for #17, "What do Anne and Laura like to be called?" none of you guys got enough answers right to be mentioned, so you'll just have to deal with your ignorance! So read up...maybe we're in Webster's under "goddesses".

So much soul! Listen to the beat, move your dancing feet...

Reggae Got Soul!

--The Waiting Souls--

Recently, I ran across a rerelease of the Waiting Souls "The Very Best of..." on Shanachie Records. I have to share with my reggae-lovin' brothers and sisters the greatness of the Waiting Souls. I tried to find out as much as I could about them, which wasn't very much, but I do what I can.

The Souls, or the Rengades, as they were then called, formed in 1965. The founding members Winston "Pipe" Matthews, George "Buddy" Haye, and Lloyd "Bread" McDonald used to sing with Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, and Bunny Wailer while growing up on the streets of Trenchtown. For a while, they were known as Pipe and the Pipers to avoid being mistaken for Bob Marley's Wailers (both bands were on the Tuff Gong label at the time). They emerged from this period with a permanent fourth member, ex-Black Uhuru singer Rudolph "Garth" Dennis, and remained together, collectively known as the Waiting Souls, for ten years.

"WAR", their classic disco '45, was the first 12" single release on Greensleeves Records. At a time when reggae artists were the only ones experimenting with dub and toasting techniques, a trend in which the Souls set the tone. In 1977, the single "Brenda Gravalicious" was released, one of their first self-productions. They were briefly associated with Island Records, and then joined creative forces with producer Henry "Junjo" Lawes, a fusion which resulted in two very successful albums, including "Fire House Rock," probably their most famous record. They also recorded tracks on the legendary Studio One label, including "Things and Time."

From the 60's to the mid-'80's the Waiting Souls have produced rock-solid steady rolling reggae, a unique sound which can only be compared to the early Wailers. Powerful and soulful, Pipe's vocals have established the band's prominence in many reggae circles. Their dedication to their music clearly shines through in the quality and clarity of it. They renewed my respect and love for all reggae--from the roots up.

-Laura-

10

popular, because I'm in a band and stuff, it's great! (laughter) But uh, I don't know. What I'd love to do is start a swing band.

TMN: You could wear that skirt!

Megan: (laughter) Yeah, I'm looking pretty sexy tonight, I'm proud of myself...I look like a girl! I'd really like to start a swing band, so, but I don't know too many good horn players, so, you know. But whatever comes of it...Andy and I were kind of thinking of more like a Goldfinger-like sound, although everyone thinks that's so fucking sell-out. I LIKE GOLDFINGER.

TMN: So, what are you gonna do tonight?

Megan: What am I gonna do tonight...tonight, there's a big party at the Taffie House, and uh...I don't know if I'm gonna go to that, my dude Don's gonna meet me here, he's so cool! He's, like, bliss! You can write that, I don't care!

Someone in bathroom: There's a party at Taffie House tonight?

Megan: Yeah, you should go!

TMN: Where's you meet him? (Don)

Megan: Actually, I went to grade school with him, he was a couple grades ahead of me. We were actually in a jazz band together, when I was a sophomore! And anyway, he works where I work. He quit, but he came in and I was like, "Hey, what the hell is up?"

Someone else in bathroom: Bathroom interview?

Megan: Yeah, it's the rock star way to go...now I'm gonna shoot some heroin, that'd be cool!

TMN: We all are (laughter)

Megan: Short some crack and, uh...have sex a lot...

Background Person (approvingly): Yeah!

TMN: Put a lot of eyeliner on...

Megan: And paint my tongue black!

TMN: And throw up.

Megan: Yeah...get really drunk, kill some hotels, maybe. Let's see, so, we hung out a lot. It's been really cool.

TMN: At least you don't quit the band and have no one to hang out with.

Megan: Yeah. You know...I'm gonna hang out with them. George is so cute! At our last practice, I was getting all sentimental, again, I was just like "guys, I don't wanna break up!"

I didn't cry though, you know, because I'm tough and hardcore. And George...what a fuckin' putz...I love this kid...was like, "I like you Megan, I've always liked you! We can still hang out!" (laughter) I was like, oh George...go jack off or something...But, he's cool. Everyone in the band is very cool.

TMN: You guys are all still gonna hang out?

Megan: Yeah. For all you readers - Pontius Pilate is awesome. Hang out with us, we're fun people.

TMN: Are you honorary BSTC?

Megan: I guess I'm honorary BSTC! I quit drinking, so I don't know, I haven't hung out there, at the Taffie House, in forever. But, they all got my back, you know. Tom is really cool. They're all looking out for me, so...it's good.

TMN: What was your favorite show you played?

Megan: Uh...when we played with the Parka Kings at the Buzz (there) May tenth.

TMN: I didn't go, I heard so much about it, though.

Megan: Oh...the Parka Kings are the greatest guys. They were so much fun. People were fucking shit up...it was great. And then, the show we just played, I was so emotional. We played Weezer, man!

(Laughter) It was crazy! How awesome is that! Yeah, that show was definitely up there...I'm keeping my set list and putting it on my wall! I'm such a girl! Bleah!

TMN: Before I go, is there anything you wanna say?

Megan: I dunno, I guess, keep ska alive, Cincinnati. That sounds really cheezy, but bring the scene together. You can go to hardcore shows, and you can go to emo shows, go to indie shows, you can fuckin go to the symphony, cause I love classical!

TMN: Can we go to Pearl Jam?

Megan: You can go to Pearl Jam, too! (someone in bathroom asks if they can go to Phish) You can go to Phish, too. Whatever you want. Music is music, and if you love it, you love it. Music brings people together. And ska isn't about I'm rude and you're not, it's about, uh, unity, man.

Background people: Unity! Unity! (laughter)

Megan: That sounds so retarded, but it is. It's like I can say that, you know. But, you know, keep your eyes peeled for new stuff, and don't...I mean, give new bands a chance, cause now I'm gonna be in a new band. People don't give new bands a chance, and you really should support the scene! Go to basement shows. I love basement shows!

Thanks again, Megan for a great interview. PPND will be missed on the Cincy scene! TMN looks forward to seeing the brainchildren of these talented crazy cats in the near future. Good luck guys!

-Laura-

23

Local Scene Stuff-Local Scene Stuff-Local

Alright, first of all--the curfew in Reading is midnight (and, believe me, the cops aren't too lenient about it *sigh*). Just a word of advice, if you will...

Hmm...secondly, Pontius Pilate, one of the Cincinnati area's best-known and liked ska bands, is breaking up after a show tonight on the 17th. I'd be there, but refer to news tidbit #1...Pontius does expect, however, to go back to the studio and finish up recording a full-length CD release sometime in the near future. Side projects (an early-Clash style band, the Projectiles, is in the works, so keep an eye out) are planned by most of the members, so keep an eye out...

Short Millie, another Cincinnati band, is celebrating the release of their first full-length CD tonight at the show with Pontius. It's actually not due for another week, but is self-titled and is available for a price of...hmm, good question...

Ed. Note: This page needs updating since I wrote it in February! Since then, Annie, Short Millie's lead singer, parted ways with the band...

Venues in NYC have soul/ska nights...Baltimore has soul nights...why can't Cincinnati have a decent ska night? Granted (*sniffle*), several of Cincinnati's most knowledgeable and most avid collectors are moving away this spring...all the more reason to get on with it and, compensate, and enjoy the music. Some sort of collaborative project to have a regularly scheduled night to spin--even if it were only once a month, with a different person spinning each time. If you want, by all means contact me (Anne). I would love to help in any way possible.

Excellent local radio shows: find out WAIF's radio schedule! It's public radio with some fantastic programs...Sundays feature Zion Daughters (2-4 p.m.), followed by two hours of a world music program...laaaate Monday/early Tuesday blasts new hip-hop...and from midnight 'til two on Fridays Ras Dagga does progressive dub. I haven't updated this recently, but I'm pretty sure Skandal! (playin' all the BOSS ska tunes on Wednesdays) will be back this summer...

After Pontius Pilate's last show (which was unforgettable), I caught up with an emotional Megean Ayers (who you might remember from TMN #0071) in the bathroom at Buzz. The pictures didn't come out (Jenny McCarthy-style, on the toilet!), but it really

TMN: So, how do you feel, right after the band broke up?
Megean: I feel very depressed...uh...they're my buddies, I love 'em to death. I dunno...I guess Pontius Pilate's pretty much been my rise on the social ladder (laughs), I guess. It's been about two years, and I love 'em, so much. I didn't think it bothered me until, like, after the show. I started crying, it was terrible, I felt like such a girl.
TMN: What brought this all on, breaking up and everything?
Megean: Um... Dylan, Dylan, Dylan...I love the boy to death, but, uh...he's a great guy, but he's got a lot of other influences besides ska, you know. I mean, he's an original punk man, from the old school, and he wants to do a punk band. He's been having problems with us for awhile. Not us, personally, but the music. And A.C. wants to do some jazz. I don't know what George wants - he just wants to do something else. They brought it up at practice one day, and I wasn't even there, I was at work, I had to find out about it from Andy, our bassist, when I got home from work. I wasn't surprised, 'cause we'd been having disagreements and problems, and whatnot. I wish we weren't breaking up, but I guess they need to move on, and that's great for them.

TMN: What are you gonna do?
Megean: What am I gonna do... (Joanna walks in the bathroom.) We're gonna hear you pee!

TMN: The peeing sound in the background is Joanna!

Megean: But, yeah... rock star interview! (to another person walking in) What am I gonna do...that's a good question. Uh...Nick and Andy and I, and T.K., we're thinking about doing something together, which I would love, cause T.K.'s the bomb, I love that kid! I'm so happy for Anne and him! (we talk about the cuteness of it all for awhile...) Yeah, so, I might be doing something with them...I got a few offers, I don't know...
TMN: You gonna stay with ska?
Megean: Uh... I dunno, you know. I mean, Pontius Pilate totally brought me onto the scene. Completely. I was, like, virgin of ska before they came along, you know, and they just totally changed my outlook on everything, you know. All of a sudden I'm

RISE OF THE SKA GEEK

by Noah Wildman

A couple of years back, I wrote a piece pretty much automatically make you a ska about the splintering of ska into traditional geek. Some women skinheads shave their sounding and rock influenced camps. When heads and leave a fringe in front; this style is describing the subculture of each one, I called a Chelsea. For a male to have this described the later camp as "those new-age ska haircut is automatically a ska geek. types with the checkered sneakers and the Suspenders (aka braces) have usually been plaid everything and a tuft of hair poking out worn black and pencil thin in ska circles. the top of their forehead." A few weeks later, Some younger fans wear what they can get-- a kid with checkered sneakers, plaid their dad's one-inch seat belt suspenders. That everything and a tuft of hair sticking out of his along with two-button, ill-fitting modern forehead came to my place of business and business suits are quite ska geeky, as are any smacked me in the face. (And later that week, other dress-up clothes which are immediately a posse of skinheads cornered him and identifiable as you parents'. Pork pie hats threatened to smack him back Doc Marten have always been stylish--kind of like a fedora style, but that's another story...)

Relatively recently, the term 'ska geek' has come to the forefront to describe the kid who smacked me. It's used in a derogatory sense, but I think as ska gets more popular, and skafans will co-opt the term just as homosexuals call each other 'faggots' and black people call each other 'niggaz.' Ska-influenced and ska-friendly bands are now Top 10--No Doubt, Sublime--and hordes are now bound to follow at some point. The 'old-school' ska fans will have to separate themselves from the tide of bandwagoners, and what better way then to call themselves 'geeks'?

Patches and pins have always been a hot ska accessory, and covering the majority of your flight jacket with them is rather geekish (a symptom I myself have subscribed to). If you sew patches onto an article of outerwear or trenchcoat, yes--this is quite ska geeky. Sewing ska patches to back pack or book bag is kinda geekish, especially if you have the whole bunch in no particular pattern, amongst scribbles of other bands' names in black marker.

Is being a ska geek bad? God no, for it is better to be a ska geek than a grunge bunny or a goth or a headbanger or a hippy. Ska geeks are young, typically younger than twenty-one, usually younger than eighteen. Now if you're still dressing like a ska geek at twenty-five, you have a problem. From what I have observed, ska geekdom is an interpretation of the whole skinhead/mod fashion of the ska scene, reinterpreted through pre- and post-pubescent eyes on a very limited budget. If they don't drop out of the ska scene as they get older, I suspect some of them will develop tastes in a more subtle, smooth direction--towards the mod skinhead 'rudeboy' look, which is dark, narrow, sleek, and very retro.

As ska gets more popular more people will like it, but what we fail to forget is: more people will HATE it. Those unwilling to dig past the patina of ska that Top 40 throws up will dismiss it as that 'wacky, zany polka shit that only ska geeks listen to.' For them, ska geekdom is not a fashion--it is a catch-all



How does one identify this new breed of ska fan? It's basically wearing your fandom on your sleeve--a fashion statement. There's nothing subtle about it. Excess checkerboards (the symbol of the Two-Tone movement) and/or an excess of plaids (the trademark of the Mighty Mighty Bosstones)

Alright, boys n' girls...It doesn't matter whether you're a skin or not--you wouldn't like it if the media were capping on "your" subculture unfairly, would you? I thought so. Next time you hear someone saying all skins are racist, set 'em straight. And in the meantime, feel free to print this letter for anyone you choose....-anne

Dear Editor:

The press' coverage of the recent tragedy in Colorado brought to light prejudice in its most insidious, reprehensible form--racism. Another more often overlooked example is that of the blind stereotypes associated with a sub-culture of our society, skinheads. Since its inception, this way of life has been plagued with bad press. The public, often misinformed, simply assumes that skinheads are racists and fascists--when, indeed, this is far from the truth.

The true original skinhead cult began as a grass roots working class movement in the mid to late-sixties in Great Britain, largely a mixture of existing youth cults (such as Mods) and an infusion of Jamaican culture. Politics took no place in one's identity as a skinhead. While it is impossible to encapsulate such a diffuse concept, being a skinhead is, in short, about working class values, pride in oneself, dressing smartly, and camaraderie and loyalty to one's friends. It's about a straightforward life of hard work and hard play.

Unfortunately, however, for a variety of sociopolitical reasons, racists, too, began to be on the rise in Great Britain and infiltrated the ranks of skinheads. Their invidious ignorance gleans them the derogatory title of "bonchads," many anti-racist skinheads today are members of organizations formed to counteract these "skins"--and racism and fascism in general. S.H.A.R.P.S. (Skinheads Against Racial Prejudice) is among the largest of these, but there are many others related and devoted to these principles, including S.C.A.R., R.A.S.H., et cetera. It is often skinheads who are the most dedicated and active in organizations such as Anti-Racist Action. I had the pleasure of meeting a group who had traveled nearly four hours--simply to show their solidarity against prejudice--to Hamilton, Ohio this past September to protest an Aryan Nation Rally. Many of these faces as well as quite a few of whom I had not seen before were at the national ARA convention in Columbus from October seventeenth to nineteenth; I marched hand-in-hand with one

during an anti-fascist, anti-police brutality march there. I have witnessed firsthand their dedication. Moreover, I have witnessed firsthand their frustration and disappointment with their gross misrepresentation perpetuated by the press. As purported conveyors of the truth, this is a travesty and a mistake on the part of the media.

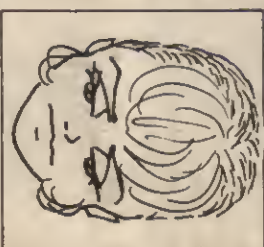
I would implore you, as the reader, to take the time to debunk stereotypes in all facets of our society and media before depicting others in an inaccurate and offensive light. Prejudice takes many forms, but all stem from ignorance.

Thank you.

Time Magazine Letters
Time & Life Building, Rockefeller Center
NYC, NY 10020

*you have to include your full name, address, and telephone

Newsweek
251 W. 57th Street
NYC, NY 10019-1894



Hey--speakin' of--did any of you here in Cincinnati see Channel 12's "coverage" of straight edge? You know, the story where sXe kids are now supposedly NEO-NAZI's just using the "drug free idea" as a lure to get new "recruits"? Or maybe you just caught the part where they kindly informed the public that all sXe ts are "violent, issuing challenges to rival gangs." The tag which they showed, by the way, was on a designated tag wall in KY... Their butchering of the truth was no less than obscene. Please write in...

WKRC Channel 12
1906 Highland Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45219*

*Update: Since the time this article was written Channel 12 held a "forum" from what I heard the cop who was supposedly the "gang expert" refused to concede that sXe kids aren't the new 4th Reich... 12

punk scene. Ben was more into R&B and Latin music before the rest of us were really exposed to it. Our first guitar player, Bill DiDonziano, and myself were more into rock-jimi Hendrix kind of stuff--at the time of our foundation. And I also came from a HEAVY jazz background; my dad used to sit in and play guitar with several old-time jazz greats, many of whom I had the privilege of meeting. But we all listened to each others music, and were really a big family who liked to be around each other most all of the time. It was really, really a great time!

TMN: What about that name?

BEP: When we decided to start a band, we sat around and tried to think of a name before even mentioning what to play. Somebody suggested "Fish," but thankfully that was not well-received. We took the name from a skateboarding poster in Mike's room that had a damnation on a skateboard: "See Spot. See Spot shred. Shred. Spot, shred." Comy, true, but hey--we've always been comy.

TMN: True enough. :P Any memorable shows thus far (bands with whom you've played, etc)?

BEP: The first time we played with the Skatalites, we almost didn't know what to do with ourselves. We were even asked to pick up Roland Alphonso from the airport, since he was traveling alone to meet the band. When we went to pick him up, he wasn't there! We thought we would be remembered as the band that lost Roland Alphonso. We were sooooo shaken up, until we saw him at the show. He had come in on another flight and taken a cab to the show. But he was soooo appreciative that we had even offered. They all were. We took a zillion pictures and had a great time. Another memorable show was when we played at the "Ska Parade" CD release party. There were so many people there that the management had to turn them away in droves. The Aquabats were the opening band; Angelo Moore from Fishbone played with us for our set, and Sublime sent their dalmation onto the stage while we were playing. See Spot, eh? Even though their kind of music wasn't our thing, the guys from these bands, the crowd, and the atmosphere were so welcoming that we'll never forget it. Other great shows were: with the Mudsharks in Reno on our first tour (they barbequed for us and were gracious hosts the whole time), and opening for Justin Hinds recently at The Loft--the music was fantastic and he is a legend. When we played in Hawaii just last month we made great friends and were really appreciated.

TMN: Have you toured much outside of the western U.S.?

BEP: Nope. I recently got back from touring with Mobtown, who went all across the country, but SeeSpot has only played the west coast. We are, however, trying to get out to the east coast in February/March to play a few shows. Having been on tour with Mobtown, I hope to use that experience to help make the SeeSpot thing go smoother--but who knows what will happen.

TMN: Any bands out here you like?

BEP: Yeah--I really like Eastern Standard Time, having seen them live. Their keyboardist is amazing, and they've got this great kind of energy. We also saw the Slackers recently in L.A., and they've got a really smooth feel to them. Skavooie and the Epitones were really tight when I saw them too. That's about all I can comment on right now. I usually judge a band based on their live performances, and those are all I've seen from the East at this point, although I really like the new Stubborn All-Stars CD.

TMN: Cool. Okay--anything else you'd like to add?

BEP: Hmmmm....I guess just to look out for us and come see our show if we happen to be playing near ya. We've got a CD out too, but the shows are what it's all about. That's where the music is real, live, and true.

TMN: Okay--thanks. =)

BEP: No, no, no. Thank YOU!

Ed. Note: Sadly, SeeSpot has announced since this interview that they have all decided to move on to new projects. Is there any love in your ska?...

If you don't get a chance to see the band in the spring, their record company is:

Landera Records
P.O. Box 441
Higland, CA 92346

--Kim--

★HEY BANDS★

inform us of any shows you're playing in the Cincy area + we'll have an upcoming shows page in the next issue! Good P.R., eh?



Oooh...SeeSpot. See Spot play wicked good ska. Neo-trad grooves at their best, highlighted in their full-length release "Is There Any Love in Your Ska?" as well as several comps (including the particularly solid "SKAauthentic"). Their charismatic lyrics and tight sound are guaranteed to hold your attention. But don't let me convince you...Here's Kim "Connection Girl" Scholtz of TMN in correspondence with one of the founding members of the band, keyboardist Brad Pate:

TMN: Okay, let's get the generic questions out of the way: history of the band, where are you located, and all that...

Brad Pate: Okay. Well, first off, SeeSpot is based in the San Fernando Valley, Los Angeles county. The band started back in 1990 when a bunch of friends decided it would be "cool" if we all learned instruments and played in a band. We each picked up an instrument, and, with minimal musical training, we learned how to play music with each other.

TMN: Was it your intention to start a ska band or did it just happen naturally?

BEP: No. we first started playing punk and old rock and roll covers. We did this because it was easier music for us to play at that stage. We practiced an practiced an played in garages and backyards for two and a half years. It wasn't until late 1992 that we decided to play ska. We had some friends who played sax, so we asked them to play with us. We were big Two-Tone fans at the time so that's what we covered. I think we played all of the Specials, Madness, and Bad Manners songs that we had. But, in reality, we were god-awful! We gradually

discovered that all of these songs that we covered were in fact covers of older songs. We fell SOOOO in love with the roots of ska music that we decided to emulate it. We added a trumpet and rehearsed even *more* often, even spending entire weekends together to capture "the sound." When we finally decided to play our first "professional" show in February of 1994, our saxes quit. So we asked this guy whom we'd met, Jeremiah, to help us out by playing sax. We were stoked that he agreed because he used to play with Hepcat. He really gave us a solid education on HOW to play the music, having come from one of the best. And that's basically how we got started.

TMN: Influences?

BEP: We have a wide variety of influences. We are, of course, influenced by the Skatalites, Bob Marley and the Wailers, and Toots and the Maytals inspiring us to play the music right. But we also have many Latin influences (Mongo Santamaria, Tito Puente, Cal Tjader), jazz influences (Horace Silver, John Coltrane, Dave Brubeck), calypso (Harry Belafonte), big band (Count Basie, Duke Ellington), and current ska bands that we loved to go see before we started (Jump With Joey, Hepcat). A wide variety.

TMN: Interesting. How about music you are all into, outside of ska and jazz? Did you all come from the punk scene or was it a mix?

BEP: It was a mix. There are only three founding members left in the band now, Charles Farrar (vocals), Ben Farrar (drums), and myself (keyboard). Charles was definitely a major reason we started playing punk at the outset. He and our first bass player, Mike Brewer, were heavily into the

Take Me With You!

-An interview with The Jumpstarts-



After hearing the Jumpstarts' soul/ska fusion for the first time, I wrote to them, hoping for an interview. Well, not only did I get the greatest interview ever from super-great John Willse, but I fell in love. With which one? Obviously--all of them!

TMN: Hi! I'm hailing from Cincinnati, Ohio. My friend Anne and I (Laura) do a 'zine thing called 'That's my Number' and we wanted to know if you'd grant us an interview. The questions are below, and I hope you have the time to fill them out. Only a few minutes of your time, yo!

John: Greetings, and congratulations on your new 'zine. Truly ladies after my own heart. Bottom to the top, top to the bottom. Forever will Forever will there be a need off/for efforts supporting our roots in whatever capacity, in whatever form of music. And in this case, well...what was that number? Jimmy Cliff had a song about the same experience. I bet you know. Challenging you to shout it from a mountain top. Education of and by the roots, if only for appreciation. Few know, more should, and I imagine readers will have you to thank in the end. But then, I guess it never ends, does it?

The Jumpstarts thank you for supporting us and wish you everlasting success. May the feeling in you...continue...

TMN: Who are your influences?

Jumpstarts: Al Green, Taj Mahal, Toots Hibbert.

TMN: Who are your favorite hands/musicians?

Jumpstarts: a) Ska, Rock Steady, Reggae - Skatalites, Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, Toots and the Maytals, Ken Boothe, Ethiopians, "Scratch" Perry, U-Roy, Alpha Blondy b) World - Fela Anikulapo Kuti, Hugh Masekela, Vinx

c) Soul - Al Green, Marvin Gaye, Roberta Flack, Bobby Womack, Jerry Butler, James Brown, Teddy Pendergrass, Ray Charles, Stevie Wonder, "Fat Boy" Billy Stewart, Isaac Hayes, Dells d) Blues - Taj Mahal, John Lee Hooker, James Booker, Freddy King, Ruth Brown, Elizabeth Cotton, Van Morrison e) Folk - Bob Dylan, Richie Havens, Harry Chapin, Nina Simone f) Jazz - Dexter Gordon, Betty Carter, Freddy Hubbard, Roy Eldridge, Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Christian, Thelonious Monk g) Funk - Earth, Wind, and Fire, Ohio

Players...and then there are those that I just like a lot.

TMN: What band have you most enjoyed playing with?

Jumpstarts: Without a doubt, the Skatalites. Proved to be every bit as beautiful as their music. I hold them in highest regard, not solely as musicians but also as human beings. I sincerely hope that it has not been the last time that our musics meet. Too much fun.

TMN: What's your favorite movie?

Jumpstarts: "The Godfather I & II", ever since I can remember. I see them at least once a year. Each time they're a little different and, I suppose, it's because I am, too. It lays on pretty thick, I mean, about morality, loyalty, and that sort of thing. So I'll throw myself into the mix to see where I'm at. Pretty damned interesting, that role playing. I like "Harold and Maude" as a strong third.

TMN: What 3rd wave ska band do you think you could take in a fight?

Jumpstarts: I think you mean, "TO a fight", and to that, I say, Jump with Joey. Tell them we're on for the next "TYSON-HOLYFIELD" bout and I don't care what they say. Tyson could take him...in a fair fight.

TMN: What do you think about all the bands trying to bill themselves as ska who think the Maytals are a brand of refrigerator?

Jumpstarts: I don't know. You can't get on them much. No matter what you do, you got to do your own thing. I guess it goes back to what I said to you about educating. You seem to know what's up, and I'm hip to it, but just keep on doin' what you're doin'. The difference between truth and fiction is what changes, and what stays the same.

TMN: What do you do in your spare time? Jumpstarts: I like to say I get "organized", but I won't bother. Read, write...uh, little of this, little of that. You know.

TMN: Who are your favorite authors?

Jumpstarts: Oscar Wilde, Raymond Chandler, Ernest Hemingway, Mark Twain, Philip Roth, Colin Turnbull, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

TMN: What's your favorite fast food place?

Jumpstarts: Now, that's a rather bizarre question. Still, I aim to appease. I absolutely adore Subway, U.S.A.. Their Seafood & Crab Submarine with x-tra mayo, lettuce, tomato, x-tra black olives, oil, salt, pepper, and oregano is to die for. Thank you for asking.

TMN: What's the funniest or most random thing that has happened to you while touring?

Jumpstarts: It could be the time I was arrested and thrown in the slammer for trespassing at a "putting" establishment in the wee hours of the morn, post-show munchie mode, but you wouldn't want to hear about that.

TMN: Why don't you come play here? Cincinnati got soul! (really).

Jumpstarts: I don't doubt that Cincinnati "got soul", as you say, but how about the Jumpstarts coming up there in January or February to see for ourselves? Just for you. Until then, my my my...ladies, so long.

Any more questions, speak to my lawyer. It's been a pleasure. Thanks to both of you, again.

Well, there you have it. I'm just going to catch my breath. Inhale, exhale, inhale, exhale...Damn it Anne, where's my paper bag? Okay, a million thanks to Mr. Willse and the rest of the band for an enlightening, beautiful, entertaining interview. You are completely amazing. So, can we try for April or May?

You can hear The Jumpstarts' talents on comps such as "Girls Go Ska" (Stimmerdown), "Roots, Branch, and Stem" (Kingpin), and "Spawn of Skarmageddon" (Moon NYC), and their 6-track CD, "Just A Little Bit" (Baron). All this, and more (t-shirts, stickers, and the like) can be purchased through their impressive web site Jumpstarts@mindspring.com

-Laura



THE BLACK POOL

was a way of owning an identity in a society teeming with faceless slums. They longed for self-expression and recognition. They danced the Ska differently--slower and with a menacing posture. They related to scotflaws and the underworld. Ska changed to reflect the mood of the Rude Boys, their plight reflected both in the lyrics and the music itself, in which the bass was played with more tension, replacing the earlier, more free-walking style.

From the summer of 1966 to 1967, many records were released containing lyrics detailing the exploits of Rude Boys. Whether they supported or condemned the mayhem Rudes caused, almost every major Jamaican artist's recordings included them as subject matter. Anti-gun sentiment was expressed in songs like the Soul Brothers' "Lawless Street," the Heptones' "Gunmen Coming to Town," and Duke Reid's "The Rude Boys (Shuffling Down Bond Street)." While these artists and others disapproved of these "glorified hoodlums," others supported the Rude Boys as heroes, not unlike the gangsters and cowboys appearing in popular films of the day. Dodd helped out one such group of young Rudes--the Walters. Prince Buster, too, empathized with the Rude Boys, inventing the mythical Judge Dread, who handed out 400 year sentences to those Rudes unfortunate enough to be arrested.

Indeed, whether or not it can be ascribed to the extreme heat that summer, 1966 saw a veritable explosion in violence and clashes with authority throughout the island. A state of emergency was declared on the island. Both Manley's PNP and Bustamante's JLP began to use armed forces and organized squads against these violent youths, and trouble zones in Kingston were cordoned off. A 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew was enforced. Finally, the Jamaican government passed a law mandating that all those discovered with illegal guns not turned into authorities would be detained for an unspecified amount of time by the order of a special Gun Court. Songs such as the Rulers' "Copasitic" express the dire urgency felt in the streets of Jamaica. Soon, ska became so closely associated with the working class and crime that politicians forbade its performance at any official functions. As Jamaica's economy slumped in the years of 1965 to 1967, the national feeling of unity and identity had faded. The upper and middle classes tried to distance themselves from ska and the Rude Boy culture, fearing that they were a threat to their own allegiances to imperial culture and chances of being accepted by the Western World.

This period coincides with one of the major changes in the island's music. The same heat that inflamed tempers also made dancing to ska exhausting, leading to a natural slowing of the music. Finally, ska slowed down enough to be a completely new form of the music, Rocksteady. The topic of Rude Boys, ever-prevalent throughout the ska period, peaked in popularity about the time Rocksteady was born. By 1967, the weather and tempers had cooled, and the Rude Boy became a less frequent theme in lyrics. Nonetheless, ska--with its lasting legacy as being Jamaica's first homegrown music and one of its greatest cultural exports--would live on in the hearts of many. It was a celebration music reflecting the optimistic post-independence mood. For the Rudes, it was all about having fun, even in the face of oppression. It gave a voice to the working class, and a foundation for Jamaica's most famous form of music--reggae.



-Sound Systems, Ska, and Rudes in Jamaican Culture-

Musical interest and unique musical traditions have existed in the third world for centuries, but the mid-twentieth century's increase in communication allowed for the increased accessibility of outside musical ideas and influences. While the West began to force its music on the rest of the world, the third world picked up certain influences and used them to create their own sound. One of the most important geographical areas that borrowed aspects of Western music is the Caribbean, especially Jamaica. While they still remained part of the Commonwealth of Britain, by 1962 Jamaica was self governed, for the British empire, which had begun crumbling pre-World War II, was now acquiescing to pressure from its colonies to grant independence. Jamaican culture began to reflect the country's optimism and aspirations of its newly liberated people.

Before the Second World War, music in Jamaica consisted of calypso, a local variant called mento, and several types of religious music. Mento is essentially depoliticized calypso and adaptations of British folk songs and sea chanteys. It was often so lewd and dirty that the Jamaican church prohibited the sale of many of the records, which were then simply sold under the table. All of these forms of music remained popular, but after the war they became dominated by American popular music. Because most were too poor to travel to America, it wasn't until after the war when large radio stations began cropping up in cities such as Miami or New Orleans that Jamaica became exposed to American music. As the ocean provided little interference, on clear days Jamaicans began enjoying the urbane, danceable sounds of R&B, Jazz, and Boogie Woogie. The music was analyzed, taken apart, translated, and sped up to reflect a mento influence--a more scattered beat--as it was put back together by local musicians. This exposure in combination with changing social forces which began to influence and change the culture. The pure mento which Jamaicans had been content with came up until the early Fifties began giving way to the influence of American popular music culture.

The growing industrialization of the island created a more urbanized culture in which many workers left their parishes to search for opportunities in large towns. Since music was one of the only affordable social activities, dancehall owners and entrepreneurs such as Clement Seymour Dodd, Leroy Riley, and Headly Jones helped to satisfy the needs of the rapidly changing musical culture. As most Jamaicans could not afford radios that picked up distant American stations and Jamaican radio was government-controlled and conservative, the spread of Rhythm and Blues music was dependent on the sound systems of the dancehalls. The lack of a record industry stemming from a paucity of recording equipment meant that the sound systems flourished. Originally introduced in the late 1940's, these locally-manufactured mobile discos, complete with custom-built turntables and oversized speakers, were simply extensions of record shops whose owners owned a large supply of newly imported American records. Tom Sebastian set up the first mobile unit in the early 1950's. Due to his overwhelming success, other owners quickly followed suit, traveling with their sound systems to various parts of the island in order to spread the latest dance music. The tunes of such well known American artists as Fats Domino, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Ray Charles, and others emanated from the dancehalls from Friday night until the early hours of Monday morning. Men like Prince Buster (Cecil Bustamante Campbell), Sir Coxsoné Dodd (Clement Seymour Dodd), and King Tubby assumed the titles of royalty and busied themselves with becoming famous.

Duke Reid and Clement Seymour Dodd emerge as two of the most prominent characters in the history of the sound-system, Dodd, reigning King of Sound and Blues at the Success club for the years of 1956-1958, was called "Sir Coxsome Downbeat", after the Yorkshire cricketer Coxsome. Reid, reputed to be more in touch with those living in the ghetto, was nicknamed "The Trojan" for the Trojan fatted truck he used to transport his equipment. Both were consumed by the music. They waged musical war against each other throughout the 1950's, both traveling to the U.S. in search of exclusive records for play in their clubs.

Indeed, the rivalries between sound system operators became fierce as they competed to possess the most exclusive records and draw the largest crowds. On a few occasions two or more sound systems would be set up within hearing distance of each other, letting the

championing the cause of Jamaican independence from British colonial rule. As Jamaica neared independence in 1962 ska was at the height of its popularity, a local music began representing much more-a national identity. While dismissed by the upper class and educated, it was the voice, the celebration music, of the working class and later the Rude Boy. The upper class, however, had 'inherited a depressed colonial mentality and a gigantic national inferiority complex' (Davis 92); as a result ska was almost never heard on the radio, for it was thought to be culturally inferior. Ultimately, however, the music of the people was heard, facilitated by the initiative and spirit of the nascent Jamaican record companies led by Dodd and others.

In spite of the relative dearth of recording facilities, ska aficionados were determined to make it the first truly commercial indigenous Jamaican music. Ska, indeed, was later to be named "National Dance and Music of Jamaica," and was introduced to the world at the 1964 World's Fair in New York with performers like Byron Lee. Also, Minnie Small had a hit in the U.K. with the ska-influenced song "My Boy Lollipop." To the lower classes in western Kingston, however, these songs were seen as watered-down--a weaker, "middle class" version of their much loved music.

According to many historians, the same movement by the upper class to repress and reject ska granted it the authority to be the voice of the oppressed. Between 1964 and 1967, the island's ghettos filled up with youths looking for nonexistent work. Many fled to Kingston hoping to succeed in the music industry. From the slums in which they lived arose a musical culture fiercely loyal to and a product of the lower class: indeed, the status of the lyricist, DJ, and musician depended on it. The culture seemed accessible to most, who hoped to record and gain fame and financial independence through popularity discovered at the next dance. When their money ran out, however, they often turned to the ganja trade, crime, and violence. They felt excluded and did not share the optimism of early ska roots. They identified themselves as "Rude Boys," a term that had originated two decades earlier, and developed their own subculture. They were tough, ruling the streets of Kingston dressed in the latest fashion—for dressing sharply they felt would distinguish them in their poverty-stricken communities. Many Rudes were involved in the ganja trade, striking fear into the hearts of both civilians and the police with their intimidating enforcing tactics. Being Rude

MODERN "RUBEN" SYSTEMS



do you hear that? listen carefully...

audience determine the winner. Often, however, it was the police who arbitrated these, called in to break up the fights which ensued. In order to gain an advantage over his opponents, the sound system operator would try to ensure that his D.J. had plenty of music that the operators did not know about. Often this included scratching out the title, artist and record information of an exclusive release once it was obtained--and then claiming it as his own. For example, "Coxsone Hop" was originally Willis Jackson's "Gator Hop." Novelty was the key, and, since there was a limited number of obscure quality records, Dodd developed the idea of "toasting." He encouraged his number one D.J., Count Machuki, to imitate the fast-talking patter of American D.J.'s. Now not only would they announce the records but would also improvise rhymes over the mike while a record was playing--often both encouraging and berating the crowd--hence the birth of toasting.

The mainstays of live music through the forties and fifties were big bands. Influenced by American swing and jazz, groups like Eric Dean's Orchestra (with Don Drummond on trombone), Roy White's June Sultans, and Roy Cobern's Blue Flames performed at dances. In 1954 the first major jazz concert held in Jamaica was at the Ward Theater in Kingston. Ultimately, however, as they could not compete with the popularity of sound systems, most cut down to eight or nine members and began to play freewheeling boogie-blues, relinquishing their big-band influence to smaller Jamaican bands. These local groups, often performing at hotels all over the island, gained enough popularity to be played on the sound systems of Count Smith the Blues Blaster, Sir Nick the Champ, and Tom the Great Sebastian. By the end of the 1950's, mento, jazz, and rhythm and blues influences had merged into a new style called the shuffle. Artists like Owen Gray, the Overlanders, and Neville Esson helped it gain popularity.

The rage in America at this time, of course, was rock and roll--a genre Jamaicans rejected as difficult to dance to as it was to identify with. The fact that R&B records were becoming more difficult for dancehalls to attain meant that the sound systems across the country were now playing Jamaican music. Another major factor in the development of the Jamaican music industry was the introduction of primitive recording equipment, brought back first by furniture dealer Ken Khouri in 1956. His first commercial recording, a live performance by calypso singer Hubert Porter of "Mary Had a Little Lamb," sold 5000 copies in no time. Khouri, galvanized by this success, bought his own pressing equipment and established Federal Records. A full-scale music industry was born.

Dodd, Reid and others saw these new records as a means to increase the popularity of their sound systems. Many recording studios and companies formed and began to scout for new Jamaican talent. Prior to this new boom, the only recordings coming out of Jamaica were calypso and American and British-styled pop music. Reid formed Treasure Isle Records, Khouri established the Pioneer company, and Chris Blackwell founded Island Records. In the beginning they made do with the use of the studios of two Jamaican stations, RJR and JBC, or even makeshift studios in locations like warehouse yards or ice cream shops. Local singers, often recording with small jazz bands in an R&B style, pressed copies for their own use at dances. At first, they generally pretended that these releases were from popular American artists, but the audience was more excited to learn that these songs were Jamaican. Soon, the more popular tracks were released on a larger scale commercially. The earliest recordings were instrumentals such as Clue J and the Blues Blasters' "Pine Juice," which demonstrated the easy-going, more unstructured Jamaican take on blues. The most popular artists, however, were the vocalists, like Owen Gray, Derrick Morgan, Laurel Aitken, and Theo Beckford. One of the best early Jamaican recordings is Beckford's "Easy Snappin'."

The vocals are relaxed, while the piano feature boogie riffs from both the left and right hand, creating a rolling rhythm which would soon characterize the music.

Clement Dodd first came up with the concept of creating a new Jamaican popular music. Combining all of the components of the music played in dancehalls, mento, rhythm and blues, jazz, and boogie woogie into a new, unique form was created. Clue! Johnson, the bass player from one of Jamaica's most popular dance and recording bands, Clue J and the Blues Blasters, used to great all of the hip supporters of Sir Cossone Downbeat with the words "Love Skavooove." Dodd passed his idea down to Johnson, and in his honor the music took on an abbreviation of Johnson's favorite word: ska.

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact source or moment when the music shifted, but nevertheless it was a conscious decision. "Easy Snappin'" influenced many because it permitted many rhythmic possibilities as a function of its lack of emphasis on the beat. The



drumming switched to the offbeat, 2 and 4, while the guitar and piano played chords emphasizing the up of the second, third, and fourth beats, letting the horns fill in with various riffs. The drum, hence, reflected the blues and swing beats of American music, while guitar expresses the mento sound. The tempo was very fast, and difficult for many vocalists. The most effective records were instrumentals, with band members improvising nonsense syllables to take the place of instruments. The ska sound was not officially created until 1960 by bands recording for Dodd (Ed. note: What about Morgan's "Fat Man," "Lover Boy" (1959), etc?), but it was totally different than any other previous forms of popular Jamaican music.

The live music scene blossomed in 1961 when Byron Lee created Lee enterprises to promote live shows showcasing local talent, including his own Byron Lee and the Dragonaires. The sound system operators began recording their own tracks, often not even making the vinyl in order to maintain the exclusiveness of their music selection and prevent its theft by a rival system. The sound system war escalated so much that ruffians, whose only task was to cause problems, were sent to competitor's sound parties. Not surprisingly, they became known as "dance hall crashers." Dodd, now nicknamed Cossone after his sound system, extended the rivalry into record with his song, "Schooling the Duke."

One of the island's greatest tenor saxophonists, Tommy McCook, returned to the Jamaica in 1962 and exerted a great influence on the shaping of ska music. In 1963 he began recording and performing for Studio One with a group of other leading musicians, including Don Drummond, Lester Sterling, Jackie Mittoo, Lloyd Brevitt, Lloyd Knibbs, and Jah Jerry. Because of the overwhelmingly positive response they received, they decided to form a band. Although they broke up for the first time only fourteen months after their formation in 1964, the type of ska they played already differed from the original boogie woogie sound of the Blues Basters only several years before.

In this tumultuous political period for Jamaica, the working class became more and more drawn into politics, galvanized by the issue of national independence and identity. Two major parties founded by cousins Alexander Bustamante (Jamaican Labor Party) and Norman Manley (People's National Party) formed a loose coalition